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a valuable contribution in its field, standing somewhat above the average doctor's dissertation, thorough, and well written.

W. T. Root.

Writings of John Quincy Adams. Edited by WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD. Volume V., 1814-1816. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1915. Pp. xxvii, 556.)

WHEN John Quincy Adams left St. Petersburg to join the other peace commissioners at Gothenburg, he was in an unusually sanguine frame of mind. "The coalition of Europe against France has at length been crowned with complete success", he wrote to Abigail Adams. "I can not but indulge the hope that it opens a prospect of at least more tranquility and security to the civilized part of mankind than they have enjoyed the last half century." Peace in Europe, he thought, would leave the war between England and the United States without any object but an abstract principle. Neither would be disposed to continue the war on such a point. At the same time he anticipated no settlement of the real issue. Peace would remove any occasion for England to continue the practice of impressment, but no concession of principle was to be expected. "The only way of coming to terms of peace with England, therefore, at this time . . . is to leave the question just where it was, saying nothing about it, but I know such a peace would not satisfy the people of America, and I have no desire to be instrumental in concluding it." Events proved Adams a shrewd prophet, but Fate decreed that he should play a conspicuous part in concluding just such a treaty of peace.

On the way to Gothenburg, Adams learned to his chagrin that the scene of negotiations had been shifted to the city of Ghent. From this moment his optimism evaporated. When he arrived at Ghent in June he was of the opinion that nearly two good months had been wasted. Moreover, he was now convinced that the British ministry was not disposed to make peace. He anticipated a speedy return to his family in St. Petersburg. In this expectation he was grievously disappointed. The negotiations which finally began on August 8 dragged on through weary months until the close of the year.

It cannot be said that this volume discloses much new material on the negotiations at Ghent. The entries in the *Memoirs*, which are almost equivalent to a journal of the proceedings of the commissioners, are too closely knit to permit much new light to enter; and many of the side-lights which Adams's letters shed have been reflected in the pages of Mr. Henry Adams's *History*. Nevertheless it is a great satisfaction to have the intimate letters of Adams made accessible. His letters to Mrs. Adams during their long separation are full of entertaining comments on the daily life of the writer and his colleagues. After reading these letters one is disposed to question the common impression for which, perhaps, Mr. Henry Adams is responsible, that the five American com-

missioners were so often rent with dissension that their personal relations were embittered. A letter of December 16, 1814, to Mrs. Adams gives quite a different impression.

Adams was not blind to the defects of the peace of Ghent. It was, as he said, in its nature and character a truce rather than a peace. "Neither party gave up anything. All the points of collision between them which had subsisted before the war were left open. New ones opened by the war itself were left to close again after the peace. Nothing was urged, nothing was settled—nothing in substance but an indifferent suspension of hostilities was agreed to." Yet when all the peculiar circumstances surrounding the war were taken into account, Adams believed that the American plenipotentiaries would stand acquitted in the face of their country and of the world, and would deserve the credit of having faithfully done their duty.

It was the good fortune of Adams to be in Paris at the beginning of the Hundred Days. All readers of the *Memoirs* will recall his vivid descriptions of the scenes attending Napoleon's return from Elba. Further information was hardly to be expected; and with his usual good judgment, the editor has chosen to print only half a dozen letters written from Paris, preferring to give greater emphasis to the new diplomatic mission to England upon which Adams entered in May, 1816. Nearly one-half of this fifth volume is devoted to letters and despatches from London. Yet here again, the editor has passed lightly over the negotiations leading to the commercial treaty with Great Britain of which the *Memoirs* contain so full a record. Only a few letters dated in June and July are included in this volume. On the other hand, the letters of succeeding months supplement admirably the entries in the *Memoirs*. Diplomatic knots, both old and new, had to be untangled. Adams's despatches touch upon topics as diverse as compensation for slaves taken after the war, discriminating duties, armament on the Great Lakes, and the fisheries. Already the problem of the Spanish South American colonies had obtruded itself; and three of Adams's despatches, dated January 22, February 8, and March 30, are of especial interest as foreshadowing his subsequent policy as secretary of state.

ALLEN JOHNSON.

Lee's Despatches: Unpublished Letters of General Robert E. Lee, C.S.A., to Jefferson Davis and the War Department of the Confederate States of America, 1862-1865. From the Private Collection of Wymberley Jones de Renne. Edited with an Introduction by DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN, (New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1915. Pp. lxiii, 400.)

AFTER every source of information had been ransacked and after every person who had anything to tell had published a book, it is quite